

MEETING MINUTES
DFS STATEWIDE LABOR-MANAGEMENT
September 9, 2024

Meeting Started @ 9:30AM
7th Floor Board Room, One State Street, NYC
Via Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

LABOR

1. Barnes, Fletcher – via Teams
2. Chan, Genffrey – NYC
3. Chiu, YiemFong – via Teams
4. El-Meligy, Hesham – NYC
5. Doonan, Michael – via Teams
6. Hall, Audrey – NYC
7. Hernandez, Dorothy – via Teams
8. Chelsea Propati – NYC
9. Vithayathil, Sinoj – NYC
10. Wallace, Jeffrey – via Teams
11. Woods, William - NYC

MANAGEMENT

1. Lambert, April - NYC
2. Jerome, Tamatha – NYC
3. Saunders- Egodigwe, Laura – via Teams
4. Symonds, Kristen – NYC
5. Syriaque, Leonard - NYC

• **UPDATES ON EAP POSITION**

MANAGEMENT introduced Laura Saunders-Egodigwe, who recently stepped into the role of EAP Coordinator for DFS downstate. Saunders-Egodigwe is part of the DFS external affairs/communications team at DFS and Deputy Chief Diversity Officer. Saunders-Egodigwe has worked in DFS for approximately eight (8) years and has been involved in various activities, including Heritage month activities, and ERG's. Saunders-Egodigwe advised that, in her role as EAP Coordinator, they do not advise; rather, they only listen, assess and refer. EAP is completely confidential except in "reportable" situations where an employee or others may be in immediate danger or in cases involving child abuse. Saunders-Egodigwe will have office hours on Tuesdays and Fridays between 2pm and 5pm; however, employees may reach out anytime via email or phone if they need assistance. They will meet people in person or via Teams.

Saunders-Egodigwe also reviewed that, EAP contact information and resources may be found on the DFS Intranet - Quick Links. EAP information and resources can also be located on the Employment and Benefits tab.

- **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (“DEI”)**

MANAGEMENT welcomed Leonard Syriaque, as the new Chief Diversity Officer for DFS. Syriaque has been with DFS since April 2024. Syriaque has spent 25 years in corporate America, in DEI. Their focus has been on DEI in the areas of Talent acquisition and management – what DFS can/should be doing to attract the best talent. Syriaque provided that they have nineteen (19) events the CDO has been involved with, towards this effort. The CDO advised they are also looking into expanding Heritage Month events, in order to ensure everyone is represented.

MANAGEMENT also discussed Statewide annual reporting and DFS’ efforts to encourage all DFS staff to complete DPM 100’s. The data is maintained by Civil Service; it is voluntary for employees to complete but does give agencies better data. Also, DFS is shoring up data collection in order to be compliant with Executive Order 31, which provides for the voluntary reporting of persons with disabilities. MANAGEMENT advised that the reports are public.

- **APPROVAL AND DISCUSSION OF LABOR/MANAGEMENT MINUTES**

MANAGEMENT advised that the minutes from the 3/12/24 meeting have been finalized and signed off on. LABOR advised that the meeting minutes from the 6/11/24 are being finalized by LABOR and will be sent out soon. MANAGEMENT is doing the minutes for the 9/924 meeting, and LABOR and MANAGEMENT agreed to continue to rotate the responsibility for the minutes going forward.

- **INTRODCUTIONOF DFS’ DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
MANAGEMENT**

MANAGEMENT introduced the new Director of HRM, Kristen Symonds. Symonds comes to DFS from the Labor Department. Symonds explained that their focus has been on recruitment since joining DFS – both Competitive and Non-Competitive recruitments, as well as Classification efforts.

- **LABOR IS REQUESTING A LIST OF DFS DIVISIONS AND BUREAUS/UNITS
UNDER EACH DIVISION**

MANAGEMENT provided the requested information.

- **GRIEVANCES**

MANAGEMENT explained that, consistent with Article 34 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (“CBA”), DFS processes grievances beginning at Step 2. MANAGEMENT pointed specifically to the language outlined in the CBA, which states in relevant part, for Step 1, “The employee or PEF shall present the grievant to the *facility* or *institution* head or designated representative...” DFS is neither a facility nor institution. It is at Step 2 where the

contract makes reference to the *agency* or *department* head... As an administrative “agency”, or “department”, grievances begin within DFS at Step 2. This is in line with other administrative agencies and has consistently been the practice at DFS.

- **STAFFING AND VACANCIES**

- a) LABOR requested an updated roster, including employee Division and employee ID. MANAGEMENT advised that they had a call with Scott Harms, PEF Director of Organizing, who requested this information. MANAGEMENT reiterated the same information shared with Harms, that the information has to be compiled and is not electronically “housed” in one system. MANAGEMENT will look at compiling this information, as well as whether or not there is a mechanism to provide this information through automatic reporting, going forward, on a quarterly basis, as requested.
- b) MANAGEMENT provided LABOR with a report (hard copy) of information, including the following information:

DFS currently has 1339 employees; maximum fill level remains at 1391.

 - Currently, DFS’ jurisdictional classification includes 58% Competitive; 29% Non-Competitive; 11% exempt; 0.2% Labor class; and only 1 position that is Unclassified – that’s the Superintendent.
 - Currently, representation at DFS is as follows: 6% CSEA; 72% PEF and 22% M/C.
- c) LABOR requested that MANAGEMENT apply for a geographic pay differential for grade 18 Financial Services Examiners. MANAGEMENT explained this type is only granted when an agency can demonstrate difficulty in recruiting and hiring of specific titles/positions. DFS has not been having difficulty in recruiting and hiring of FSEs. In fact, with the HELPS program, DFS has been flooded with candidates and DFS has been actively engaged in continuous recruitment of FSEs. MANAGEMENT also advised that DFS already has an increased hiring rate for FSEs who are hired downstate, which is on top of the location pay they receive.
- d) MANAGEMENT advised that there is no change to plans to promote individuals from current Civil Service lists for FSE 2/3/4 and/or FSM 1. DFS continues to use every legal mechanism to hire and promote staff.
- e) MANAGEMENT advised that it shall not be the practice to report out on every recruitment activity or movement of staff. MANAGEMENT repeated what has been previously stated, that DFS HRM does not have the resources to manually pull the data requested. MANAGEMENT advised that rehires are part of the ongoing efforts to build capacity. MANAGEMENT advised that most retirees that are hired/rehired are going into hourly positions, which does not impact other recruitments. LABOR stated that it is their position that MANAGEMENT should be promoting rather than rehiring. MANAGEMENT reiterated that all of that is happening, and that it is about succession management and building capacity.

- **HOLIDAY PARTY**

LABOR requested MANAGEMENT's approval to allow for a full day (7.5 hours) of leave for attendance at a holiday party. MANAGEMENT advised that employees are granted one full day for the picnic and half a day to attend the holiday party.

LABOR advised that the social committee is looking into options for the holiday party, and one option is an 18-minute walk, and opined that more people would likely turn out to a party if a full day of leave was granted.

MANAGEMENT advised that, going forward, it would have more involvement in the social committees. MANAGEMENT reiterated their support of these committees and events, however, expressed concern over receiving feedback that the optic was that this was a Union event. DFS wants to ensure that going forward, all staff understand this is a DFS event and all are welcome. LABOR will send their social committee listing to MANAGEMENT for follow-up.

**Meeting was closed.
Next meeting is scheduled for
December 10, 2024 at 9:30 AM
One State Street, New York, NY 10004 in the
7th Floor Conference Room.**